BEING

For ever with the Lord,

THE

Great Hope, End and Comfort of Believers:

What it is, and how to be obtained and forethought of.

Preached by

MATTHEW SYLVESTER,

And Publiſhed at the publick Requeſt of Mr. *Ri. Baxter*, at the hearing of it.

LONDON,

Printed for *J. Robinſon*, at the Golden Lion in St. *Paul's* Church-Yard.

M.DC.LXXXVIII.

258:02

Mr.

I F
d
it
t

1.
ble to
little
of bei
and n
me to
all Te

2.
to me,
not th

TO

Mr. M. SYLVESTER'S HEARERS.

IF *you know not the Reaſons of my deſiring Mr.* S. *at the hearing of it, to publiſh this Sermon, I now tell you, they were theſe.*

1. *I was affected with it, as ſuitable to my own Condition; who have little Comfort to live on, but my hopes of* being for ever with the Lord, *and no Motive ſo powerful to engage me to my great Duty, and to overcome all Temptations.*

2. *And that which is ſo ſuitable to me, is not unſuitable to you: I am not the only Man that muſt die, and*

that hath another Life to live.

3. *Mr.* Sylveſter's *Style is ſo conciſe, and naturally elegant, that neither I nor you can ſufficiently digeſt his Sermons upon a tranſient hearing: A full and frequent review may make them more our own: Of-times four or five* Names, *or Epithets, ſignify as much as ſo many diſtinct Sentences; and his Phraſes are not always vulgar: And therefore they are like ſtrong Meat, that muſt have longer time, than lighter, for digeſtion.*

4. *The Subject is ſuch as you muſt daily live upon, and therefore ſhould be glad of a daily Help for your practical Meditations on it.* Being for ever with Chriſt in Glory, *is that which you pray for, hope for, labour for, ſuffer and wait for, deny the Fleſh and the World for, and which you muſt fetch your ſupporting comforts from, or elſe you muſt have neither Hope nor Comfort, which ſound awakened Reaſon can own.*

5. *As*

5. *As it is a diſcouragement to Preachers, when the beſt ſtudied Sermons, are forgotten at the Church-doore; ſo it is a great mercy to Hearers when they may carry home, and keep, and daily uſe, ſuch excellent and powerful Helps. If the* Devil *knew what Printing was like to do againſt his Kingdom, I wonder that he did no more to hinder the inventing of it: It was becauſe the Father of Lights reſtrained him. You Printers and Bookſellers look well to your ſelves, for next to Magiſtrates and Miniſters, there are few that Devils have more malignant deſigns upon than you, either to* ſilence *your Preſſes and Shops as to Good, or to open them to Evil. You ſpeak more publickly than Pulpits do. To many Thouſands you either preach wholſom ſaving Truth, or vend flagitious and pernicious Evil. If you vend the beſt Books only for Mony, you have your Reward; yet thouſands may have a greater gain;*

as

as carnal Preachers may periſh themſelves while their Hearers are ſaved.

Laſtly, I would have thoſe Men that have thought our ſilencing theſe 28 *Years to be the Churches Intereſt, and have called on their Rulers to ſtrike home, to ſee what Doctrine it is that we preach, and whether it deſerve Hatred and Deſtruction. If many ſuch Sermons tell them not, they may ſee it in the larger Writings, of Mr.* Ant. Burges, *Mr.* Richard *and* Joſeph Allen, *Dr.* Manton, *Mr.* Charnock, *and many more, (to paſs by the yet living).*

Your Servant,

RI. BAXTER.

1 Theſſ. iv. 17. latter Part.

Καὶ οὕτω πάντοτε σὺν Κυρίῳ ἐσομεθα.

—And ſo ſhall we ever be with the Lord.

THeſe words are a part of thoſe cheering Paſſages which were written to this excellent and much-commended Church, by way of Antidote againſt immoderate Sorrows for ſuch as ſleep in Jeſus. And indeed the provident Care and miniſterial Faithfulneſs of this great Apoſtle, clearly appears in the Matter, Order, and Vigour of Expreſſion that this Epiſtle entertains its Reader with. He firſt acknowledges what effectual Grace had brought them to, 1 *Theſſ.* 1. 2-10. He then appeals to God and them, as to his Sufferings, Doctrines, and deportment in both their genuine, deſigned, and ſucceſful references to their Good, 1 *Theſſ.*

ii. 1--20. Then (when he was to ſtay alone at *Atheus*; for which no doubt he ſaw great cauſe) he ſends *Timotheus* to them for their Eſtabliſhment and Conſolation in the Faith; and to obviate all Diſcouragements and Snares which otherwiſe might make them droop or ſtumble. And *Timothy* returns with a very good account concerning them; which ſends our Apoſtle to his Knees again, with Thanks and Joys, and further Supplications for them, 1 *Theſſ.* iii. 1--13. And then he preſſes them to walk according to his Doctrine, and abundantly to improve that Chriſtian Directory which they had received from him for pleaſing God: to avoid all polluting Sins (all Sins are ſuch, but ſome incomparably more ſo than others) as inconſiſtent with their Heavenly Intereſts and Hopes, or prejudicial thereto, and deſtructive thereof, 1 *Theſſ.* iv. 1---12. And then when they are under providential Preſſures, let them repair unto the Hopes & Comforts of their returning

ing Lord from Heaven, and of their abode with him and his whole Family for ever, 1 *Theſſ.* iv. 13--18. and let them alſo make their higheſt practical Improvements hereof, as being under better Circumſtances ſo to do, than others are, 1 *Theſſ.* v. 1--22. All which he cloſes with a ſolemn Prayer and Benediction, with teſtified aſſurance of ſucceſs herein, 1 *Theſſ.* 5. 23, 24. and hereupon he *charges them by the Lord, that this Epiſtle be read to all the Holy Brethren*, verſ. 27. as being of ſuch conſequence and concernment to them all. And hence you may ſee how this great Apoſtle guards his Conſolations; in firſt ſecuring Chriſtianity in the Spirit and Practice of it, and then proceeding to encourage and refreſh the Hearts of Mourners. Hence then conſider the Text it ſelf, in its,

I. Senſe.
II. Evidence.
III. Uſefulneſs.

I. *The Sense of the Text.*

And here these things occur'd to be considered (tho briefly) in their order. 1. The Persons determined to this Priviledg. *We who are found alive*, and *the Dead in Christ that rise first*, vers. 16, 17. and all of them *Children of the Light and Day*, 1 Thess. v. 5, 8, 9. The living Members and true Favorites of Christ, distinguished from mere Pretenders, Enemies and Strangers, by their true conformity to Christ himself, in Spirit, Purpose, and Behaviour. 2. The Priviledg and State whereto they are determined, *to be for ever with the Lord.* 3. The Time and Manner of their entrance into the full possession of this State. *Christ comes* descending with *a shout from Heaven, the Voice of the Arch-Angel, and with the Trump of God. The Dead in Christ rise first: They with the Living are caught up to meet Christ in the Air, and so they are for ever with him*, ver. 16, 17.

1. The

1. The Perſons here intended for this bleſſed State, and reckoning duly thereupon; *We.* How careful was this Eagle-eyed Apoſtle to prevent a Rape upon a thing ſo chaſt and ſacred as this our Chriſtian Hope! *You turned to God from Idols, to ſerve the living and true God, and to wait for his Son from Heaven,* 1 Theſſ. 1. 9, 10. *Your Work of Faith, Labour of Love, and Patience of Hope in our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, in the ſight of God and our Father: knowing——your Election of God,* verſ. 3, 4. It is not every one that is to be with Chriſt for ever. The Subject muſt be ſuited to this State and Priviledg; and that, not by mere Miracle, but by the fit improvements of thoſe Means and Helps which God affords us for our preparation-work. Means ſuited to their Ends are to be adhered to, and uſed accordingly. Nor can it be expected that God's Inſtitutions will ordinarily be neglected by himſelf, and that our neglect thereof ſhould be to us as proſperous, as our fit obſervation[illegible]

And yet, miſtake me not, I do not ſay, that outward Means, and moral Swaſions, are all that Chriſtian Converts are brought home by. There is a powerful quickning Divine touch upon the Soul, needful to make it throughly Chriſtian; and without this no Man becomes a real Chriſtian. And none can live with Chriſt for ever, but he that is wrought and kept thereto by ſpecial Grace and Providence. And excellent Perſons muſt ſuch be that are thus changed and kept for ſuch a bliſſful State as this here in the Text: The Apoſtle calls them, *the Children of the Light and Day*, 1 Theſſ. v. 5. ſuch as derive a new Nature from it, 2 *Cor.* iii. 3, 18. walk under the Government and Conduct of it, *Epheſ.* v. 8. and are entitled to great Priviledges by it, *Acts* xx. 32. & xxvi. 18. *John* xii. 35, 36. Let me then cloſe this Head with this; 1. Conſider who expreſly are to be excluded, and upon what accounts, 1 *Cor.* vi. 9, 10. *Galat.* v. 19--21. *Epheſ.* v. 5. *Mat.* xxv. 41--46. *Rev.* xxi. 8, 27. Hence then

then this *We* can take in no ſuch Perſons. They that make nothing of diſcovering directive, encouraging, and transforming Goſpel-Light; that have not fetch'd their Principles therefrom, and formed their Lives, and Practices, and Tempers thereunto, nor made the greateſt reckoning of theſe Privileges which are to be obtained thereby, are no ways fitted, and therefore not determined (whilſt ſuch) unto this bleſſed State. Conſider, 2. whom Chriſt expreſly hath conſigned and promiſed this Priviledg unto; *John* xii. 26. *Luk.* xii. 31--37. & xiv. 26, 27. & xxii. 28--30. 2 *Tim.* ii. 11, 12. *Luke* xxi. 36. 1 *John* iii. 1--3. & *Jude* 20, 21. 2 *Pet.* i. 5--11. & iii. 14. 'Tis not the Form, but Power of Godlineſs, that can entitle and adopt us to that State: reſolute Promoters of Chriſt's Intereſts, patient Sufferers for it, prudent Contrivers, fruitful Walkers, ſuch as are obſervant of his Conduct, obedient to his Laws, ſubmiſſive to his Providence, and ſatisfied in and with his Care and Grace, and that joy-

fully prepare and wait for his appearance and preſence, and duly repreſented him to themſelves and others, ſo as to value nothing like him; no nor themſelves but as in him and for him. Theſe are to be with him for ever; ſee 2 *Tim.* iv. 6--8.

2. The State and Privilege whereto they are determined, *to be for ever with the Lord*, John xiv. 2,3. Hence we are exhorted to *ſeek thoſe things above where Chriſt is*, Col. iii. 1. Hence, *Come, ye Bleſſed*——and *depart from me, ye Curſed*, Mat. xxv. 34,41. *Preſent with the Lord*, 2 Cor. v. 8. *They ſhall walk with me in White, for they are worthy*, Rev. iii. 4. *When Chriſt who is our Life ſhall appear, then ſhall we alſo appear with him in Glory*, Col. iii. 4. *When he ſhall come to be glorified in his Saints, and admired at in all them that ſhall believe--in that Day*, 2 Theſſ. i. 10. *Father, I will that thoſe whom thou haſt given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold the Glory which thou haſt given me*, John xvii. 24. *Chriſt with his Father are*

the

the only Temple of that Bleſſed State where all the Favorites of Chriſt muſt be, *Rev.* xxi. 23. Chriſt is *our Life in Heaven*, Col. iii. 3, 4. *Our Hope from Heaven*, Tit. ii. 13. Phil. iii. 20. *Our Plea for Heaven*, Heb.ix.15. *Our Way to Heaven*, John xiv. 6. *Our Head and all in Heaven*, Epheſ.i.20--23. We are to be with him who is the *greateſt* Friend, *Iſa.*ix.6,7. *Heb.*i.2--14. & iv. 14--16. *Rev.*i.5, 18. *Col.*i.15--19. & ii.9,10. The *deareſt* Friend, *Gal.*ii.20. *Epheſ.*iii.18,19. *Tit.*ii.14. His aim at this our Exaltation and Advancement; his ſharp and coſtly Agonies and Engagements to effect it, and the delight he took therein, prove this. And the *faſteſt* and *moſt faithful Friend*, in *Iſa.* xi.5. *Heb.* iii. 1, 2. & x. 23. & xiii. 8. But now what it is to be with Chriſt none yet fully know, 1 *Cor.* xiii. 9--12. Chriſt himſelf tells us, *We ſhall behold his Glory*, John xvii. 22. Now what is Glory, but the luſter of diſcovered Excellency and Perfection? And O the excellence of the Lord-Redeemer,

in

in his exalted State! his Transfiguration amazed Beholders! When he appeared to *Saul*, he ſtruck him blind, the diſtant ſight or glance which *Stephen* got, impreſt no ordinary Majeſty and Glory on his Countenance. But Chriſt acquaints us with his three-fold Glory, wherein every Eye ſhall ſee him, *Luke* ix. 26. There is his perſonal Glory as to his humane Nature, *a glorious Body*; Spiritual, Immortal, incapable of Sufferings; lively, and of the neareſt alliance and approach to Spirit, and every way fitted to ſubſerve the Function of his compleated Soul; and (like a Chryſtal Mirror) to have his inward Glory tranſmitted through it to all Spectators. *A glorious Soul*, exerting all its vigours in and through this Body, wherein every Geſture, Look, and Motion, and Expreſſion, ſhall ſhew the excellent Temper, Furniture, and Beauty of his Soul. O the Wiſdom, Majeſty, Holineſs and Vivacity of his Soul, which then will have their fulleſt Explications and Appearances!

pearances! And then the *fulneſs of the Godhead which dwells bodily in him*, ſhall have ſuch great and clear Diſcoveries and Effects, as ſhall delightfully entertain his Favorites with great varieties of diſcoveries for evermore. What emblemmatical Glory may attend his Perſon, as the Symbol and Signal of the extraordinary preſence of his Father with him, and complacency in him, I dare not gueſs at, nor am I wiſe or good enough to know, nor arrogant and bold enough to determine: but ſure I am, the phyſical Changes, and the judicial Proceſs and Concluſions of that Day, with the evident yieldings and ſubmiſſions of the whole Frame of Nature to his Will, and the effectual bowing of every Knee, and the confeſſion of every Tongue to him, will deſervedly bear the Character of the Father's Glory, *Phil.* ii. 9--11. And all this ſhall we behold to everlaſting Satisfaction. And we ſhall ſee his Glory further in all his Rectoral Excellencies. The Conſtitution and Adminiſtration of

of his everlasting Kingdom will declare his Eminencies; How much he is above them in Excellencies and Prerogatives. How excellently he governs them, with such extraordinary Light and Love, suited so accurately to their Capacities, Tempers, and Concerns, and every way preserving all his Subjects, and all their Entertainments and Employments, in all the harmony and decencies of a Divine Kingdom; and then how very kind he ever is and will be to them. Witness their conformity to his glorious Self, their intimate conversation with him, and the inundations of Delights that ever flow from him upon them; such a Prince! such Subjects! under such Laws and circumstances, and in such order!

3. The Time and Manner of its Commencement. Καὶ ὅτω, Christ descends, and we ascend to meet him in the Air, and then we part no more: peruse the Account hereof as given by inspired Persons; see *Mat.* xxv. 31--34. 1 *Cor.* xv. 50--54. 1 *Thess.* iv. 15--17.

Then

Then come those Visions, Dispensations, and Employments, and those reciprocal Satisfactions, which cannot be but where Christ and his Favorites are gotten and kept together.

II. *The Evidence of this Truth.*

1. Why else was Jesus Christ Incarnate? *Heb.* 2. 14. *He took not hold of Angels, but of the Seed of* Abraham, *Vers.* v. *ib.* ἐπιλαμβάνεται is there the word: and it is used of Christ when he took hold of timerous and sinking *Peter* on the Waves, *Mat.* xiv. 31. No doubt but Christ's assuming to himself our Nature, was a great hold thereon. Such an alliance and approach to Man as intimated, yea demonstrated, Christ's fitness and resolution to be both visible and delightfully conversible to all his Saints for ever, even in their own Nature. Became Christ visible that he might not be seen? Would he be Man to be eternally retired from humane view? We are told, that *the Word was made*

made Fleſh, and dwelt amongſt us, full of Grace and Truth; and that there were Eye-witneſſes of his Glory, the Glory as of the only begotten of the Father, John i. 14. And O how ample and emphatical is this Paſſage, if well conſidered by us! and how pertinent and cogent as to the Caſe in hand! *The Word*; that living quickning Word, by whom God made the World and us, *Epheſ.* iii. 9. *John* v. 26. and whom God promiſed to be the Root and Prince of Life, 1 *Joh.* v. 11. by whom, and for whoſe pleaſure all Things both are and were created, *Rev.* iv. 11. and upheld, *Heb.* i. 2, 3. Who is the Image of the Inviſible God, the firſt-born of every Creature. See further, *Col.* i. 15--19. That Word which was to be, and was, and is his Father's Oracle to tell us fully what we are to know, be, do, avoid, and truſt to, *Heb.* i. 12. *Acts* iii. 22. *Mat.* xvii. 5. 2 *Pet.* i. 16--18. Yea, and with whom, and what, and where we are to be for ever, 2 *Tim.* i. 10. Whatever then this Word ſhall ſay, may

may we expect, and reſt upon, *John* i. 17, 18. *Rev.* iii. 7, 12, 14. Think here then upon that inſinuating charm of Speech; *In my Father's Houſe are many Manſions—were it not ſo I would have told you*—John xiv. 2, 3. *This Word made Fleſh.* See *Heb.* ii. 16--18. *Rom.* viii. 3, 4. and in that Tabernacle dwelling amongſt Men: And why? that he might be our Kinſman, Surety, Brother, *Heb.* ii. 11--13. that he might thus be converſant and ſympathiſing with us, and ſtrike our *very Hearts* even through our *very Senſes*; and thereby make us fervently deſirous to be with him for ever. *Good to be here*, ſaid the Apoſtle *Peter*, when he had ſeen his Maſter's Glory in but a tranſient glimpſe, *Mat.* xvii. 4. And *we ſaw his Glory—full of Grace and Truth. Grace poured into his Lips*; and *proſperous Majeſty, becauſe of Meekneſs, Truth, and Righteouſneſs*, Pſal. xlv. 2--4, 6, 7. Iſa. xi. 2--5. And now, can we imagine that Chriſt ſhould meet us in our Nature, and tranſmit ſuch Glory to

us

us through his very Fleſh; and thus allure us and conform us to himſelf, and ſo make us fit and long to be with him, and all to drop and leave us here?

2. Why elſe was Chriſt incarnate, ſo ſpirited, employed, and exerciſed, towards and for us, whilſt in this outward Court, *Acts* x. 36--40. 1 *Pet.* ii. 21--27. *Heb.* xii. 2, 3. As to his *perſonal Accompliſhments and Deportments*, he was the Pattern of our Duty, and the Mirror of our Glory in his Preſence, *Phil.* ii. 5. 1 *John* ii. 6. with *Phil.* iii. 21. 1 *John* iii. 2. And as to his *Sufferings* he was the purchaſer of our Perſons and our Glory, that his own Grace and Name might thus be glorified in us, 2 *Theſſ.* i. 12. 1 *Cor.* vi. 20. 1 *Pet.* i. 17--21. And wherefore all this waſte, if Chriſt and we muſt part at laſt? *The Soul and Spirit is the Man*; and if *that* be not right, the Joys and Treaſures of the Heavenly Kingdom cannot reliſh well, nor be eſteemed of to purpoſe. Hence, O the viſible Beauties of Chriſt's Soul! Such

wiſdom

Wiſdom in Self-conduct! ſuch Purity, Vigour, Tenderneſs, Sweetneſs, Conſtancy, Sincerity, Fervour, and Impartiality! How inwardly, evenly, readily, and chearfully was his Soul kept for God! and how entirely were his Thoughts taken up with God! And all to let us ſee what frame we muſt be in, for an eternal Fellowſhip with himſelf in God: In him we ſee what Spirit we muſt be of in Heaven. All his Converſation in this World was but the genuine Efforts of the devotedneſs and reſignedneſs of his Soul to God, and to the good of others by his Will. And all the Excellencies of humane Nature, that a right Spirit and Behaviour towards God and Man could reach and ſhew, were ſo advanced and conſpicuous in Chriſt, as that they challenged all Mens Obſervation, and bad defiance unto all Impeachments and Arraignments, *Joh.*7.18.& 8.29,46. 1*Pet.*ii.22. His Aim and Buſineſs was our conformity to him in Sentiment, in Heart and Life, in this World, that he might

thus preſent us to his Father, as fitted for the Work and Joys of Heaven, and for the Freedoms and Delights of his own eternal Preſence. Never was humane Nature ſeen before, nor ſince, as it was in him. Such Knowledg of God! ſuch Wiſdom in the conduct of Affairs for God! ſuch Obedience and Submiſſion to the Will of God! ſuch Dependance on God, Delight and Acquieſcence in him! ſuch Expectations from him! and ſuch Fulfillings after him! *John* xvii. 4. theſe ſhew what Chriſt will bring us to, and ſo meet us in at laſt. And in this holy Courſe God met him with a ſweet Preluſion to his exalted State, and ordered *Peter*, *James*, and *John* to be Eye-witneſſes of his Glory in the Mount; and *Moſes* and *Elias* to attend him, and to be clouded whilſt his Glory ſhone, *Mat.* xvii. 1--3. 2 *Pet.* i. 16--18. Which Chriſt liked well, in that hereby it might appear, with whom we are to be for ever, and unto whom we ſhall be like. And as to his Sufferings and Death, they were the pur-

purchaſe of this State, *Epheſ.*i.14. *Heb.* v.9. & ix.15. & ii.9,10. & x.20. The Expiation of our Crimes, the Ranſom of our Souls, and the Blood whereby we are conſecrated to this ſo glorious and delightful State; compare *Luke* xxiv.26. with *Heb.*x.19--22. & xii. 24. If Chriſt then taught, did, ſuffered ſo much, that we might be both fit and ſure to be together: How can we doubt thereof, or miſs it? He knew what was in Man, what moſt affected him, and beſt became him: and what was the likelieſt way to ſuit Men to himſelf, and to the Viſions, Services, and Entertainments of that moſt glorious State and Kingdom where he himſelf now is, and will abide enthroned for ever. What Conſtitution & Complexion their Souls and Perſons were to be brought unto: What Means and Helps would be moſt expedient hereunto. What Doctrines, Laws, and Priviledges; what Ordinances and providential Diſpenſations would beſt accommodate them in this Affair: In

what Ways and Seaſons, and to what Degrees they ſhould be furniſhed and tried; and what would moſt effectually engage and keep them for his Father and himſelf. And hence we find his Name to be *Wonderful Counſellor*, Iſa. ix. 6. That in him are *all the Treaſures of Wiſdom and Knowledg hidden*, Col. ii. 3. *That all the fulneſs of the Godhead dwells bodily in him*, verſ. 9. And that *he is made of God Wiſdom to us*, 1 Cor. i. 30. Under the conduct of this Wiſdom, he acquaints them with himſelf, *John* xvii. 7, 8. He ſhews them his Commiſſion and Deſign, *John* vi. 38--40. Whither he was to go, and their way to follow him, *Joh.* xiv. 4--6. with all that might help or hinder them in their proficiency and advances towards his exalted Self, with all their needful Preparations for that State and Day wherein they ſhould behold him, and be with him, in his Meridian Glory, *Luk.* ix. 23--26. & xii. 33--38. yea, and the coſt and gain of Chriſtian Godlineſs, *Luk.* xiv. 33. & xviii. 29, 30. His evidently great

great Love to them (with all Expreſſions and Avouchments of it); this ſeaſons all his Doctrines and Inſtructions, *Joh.*xiii.1--15,34,35. & xv.8--17. He ſuffered long, was kind, vaunted not himſelf, was not puffed up, envied not, never behav'd himſelf unſeemly, ſought not his own, was not eaſily provoked, thought no Evil, rejoiced not in Iniquity, but in the Truth, and in the welfare and advancement of his own unto himſelf. He bare all things, believed, hoped, and endured all things: (for thus doth Love, 1 *Cor.*xiii.4--7.) Thus having ſhewed them what Spirit he was of, who was the brightneſs of his Father's Glory: and how this Spirit ſtood and wrought towards them: and thus, how ſafely they might truſt him, and wherein their Tempers were to harmonize and accord with his, that ſo his Preſence might be their felicity and delight; then is he frequently diſcourſing with them about the Jubilee which they and he muſt keep together in the Heavens. Peter, *thou ſhalt fol-*

low me hereafter, John xiii. 36. *Because I live, ye shall live also*: and, *then you shall know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you*, Joh.xiv.19,20,28. And *because I go to the Father, you shall see me*, Joh.xvi.16,22. and *I will come and fetch you to my self*, Joh.xiv.3. And having lived as bound for Heaven, practically shewing His their way thereto, he dies, a Sacrifice for Sin, a Ransomer of Souls, a Purchaser of Heaven, a Conqueror of Death and Hell, a Martyr for the Christian Cause and Hope, a Patern and Exempler of Patience, Fortitude, Holiness and Hope, and Love to his; and can Christ lose or leave us after all this?

3. Why else should he in his raised and exalted State, aim so directly at this thing? for all that he hath spoken and done, and is still doing, looks this way, *Joh.*xx.17. How pertinently and copiously might we improve that Paragraph! *Ephes.* iv. 1--16. as the enforcement of this Truth and Hope, did not the stated Limits of a single Sermon forbid it? Was Life and Immortality

mortality brought to Light by him, only to tantalize our Souls? 2 *Tim.* i. 10. Is it illuſtrated by the Goſpel to us as a State ſeparate from Chriſt himſelf? Muſt he, as Man, have it without us, or we without him? or muſt both have it in a State of Separation each from other? *Was not Chriſt raiſed by his Father, that our Faith and Hope might be in God?* 1 Pet. i. 21. And what is the Hope, that Chriſt and we ſhould ſee each other's Face no more! Chriſt roſe not to continue here, for he was not ſuited to this groſs animal fading ſtate and frame of Things and Perſons: And would Chriſt ſhew himſelf on Earth alive, only to ſhew us what, and with whom we never are to be? as if he only came to raiſe our Expectations to our ſhame and horror? What was the ſenſe of that great Meſſage which he ſent by *Mary* to his Brethren? *Go tell my Brethren I aſcend to my Father, and your Father; to my God, and your God*, John xx. 17. What! Sons of God, and Brethren to Chriſt, and not live together with the

ſame Father, and in the ſame Inheritance and State! *Heb.* xi. 16. *If Children, then Heirs: Heirs of God, and joint-Heirs with Chriſt; and to be glorified together*, Rom. viii. 17. *What meant his entrance into Heaven as our Fore-runner?* Heb. vi. 20. Was it to tell the glorious Inhabitants of that bleſſed World, in all their heights of Wonderment and Expectation, that he repented of this his glorious Enterprize, or that he was baffled in it, and that he cared not for having his Favorites and redeemed Ones in his ſight? What means his *Interceſſion* there? *Heb.* vii. 25. & ix. 24. whereby our Prayers, and Pains, and Hopes are ſo emboldned? *Heb.* x. 19--25, 35. & ix. 12. Prays he againſt what he appeared, endeavoured and ſuffered for? or can he not prevail with God for us? or doth he trifle with his Father within the Veil, or ſport himſelf before his Courtiers there, with our deceiving and deluded Hopes? O ſuch Blaſphemy and Solœciſm is there in theſe Thoughts, when they are matter of ſuſpicion and belief,

belief, as that no ſober thinking Mind can entertain them! *Why is he there enthroned?* Heb.viii.1. Mat.xxviii.19,20. *Why made Head over all things to his Church?* ſee *Epheſ.*i.17--23. *Addreſt unto by a dying Martyr for this thing, and he too owned ſignally*, yea, miraculouſly in this his Martyrdom and Addreſs? *Act.* vi.15. & vii.55--59. And why *commemorated* by his own ſpecial Order at the Table of the Lord, as one with whom we are to meet again as our Redeemer? 1 *Cor.*xi. 23--26. Is not this priviledg ſealed and ſecured to us by the Covenant of Grace? How can the *Amen*, the *faithful and true Witneſs*, cheriſh and ſeal to deceitful Expectations? *Heb.* x.23. 2 *Tim.*ii.10--13. What doth the Spirit of Jeſus form and ſeal us to but this? 2 *Cor.*v.5. & i.21,22. *Epheſ.*i.14. & iv.30. The Notions which he forms, the Faith which he works, the Tempers which he frames, the Deſires which he kindles, the Prayers and Labours which he animates, are all for this, 2 *Theſſ.* ii. 13,14. *How can it be the dreadful doom*

of

of all his Enemies to depart from him, if it be not our determined privileg to be with him? *Mat.*xxv.41. 2 *Theſſ.*i. 9. *Luk.*xiii.25--27. *Did not Chriſt know that his moſt glorious Preſence would be a great Ingredient into the felicity of his Servants,* as *Jude* 24, 25. aſſures us, and that *our aſſimilation to him would be compleated* (and continued) *by the Viſions of his State and Day,* as his inſpired Servant hath informed us, in 1 *Joh.* iii.2. and that *our reckoning upon it and longing after it, are the preparatory Fruits of his own ſanctifying and ſealing Spirit,* as we are told 2 *Cor.*v.5--9. & *Rom.* viii. 16--23. we had never been informed of ſuch a diſcriminating Accent in his final Sentence, as he hath told us of. *Whence was it made the Charge and Buſineſs of his commiſſionated and inſpired Officers, to teach and enforce this grateful Truth upon us, were it not certainly decreed by God and Chriſt?* 1 Cor.xv.15. Col.iii.4. 1 Theſſ.ii.19. & iii.13. Would he enjoin ſuch ſpecial Officers, ſo miraculouſly qualified and owned,

owned, to inform us of, prepare us for, and comfort us with ſo great a Bleſſing, and to repreſent it to us as the alluring and refreſhing aggravation of that State to come, *that we ſhould be with Chriſt for ever?* Did they preach falſhood by ſpecial Order, and with ſuch Atteſtations to their Meſſage, and ſuch aſſiſtance in their Enterprize from the God of Truth, and from his eminently faithful and true Witneſſes? 2 *Cor.* xi. 2. Why is this ſtatedly to influence all our practical Chriſtianity, if no ſuch Matter be deſigned for us? *Joh.*xii.26. *Tit.*ii. 12, 14. 2 *Pet.*iii. 14. 2 *Cor.*v. 9. Our preſſing Pleas and Motives that are to animate and enforce our Duties, Sufferings, and Conſolations, with all thoſe exerciſed Graces which are to ſpirit ſuch Performances, Submiſſions, and dutiful Rejoicings by the way, do evidently bear themſelves upon this Hope, 2 *Pet.*i.5--11. 2 *Theſſ.*ii.13--17. *Heb.*x. 32--37. How copiouſly and ſtrongly might I improve theſe Scriptural Hints to prove this comfortable Truth, had I

but

but a better Head and Heart! But (to conclude this Demonstration) lastly; How could the Son of God himself obtain that Glory and Delight which he so reckons on, in the success of what he undertook, were not his purchased and redeemed Ones to be with him? *John* xvii.22,24. 2 *Thess.*i.10,12. We find that *Christ and his must go together in unto the Marriage*, Mat.xxv.10. And what is this going in together, but the joint entrance and admission of Head and Members into that State of Royal Entertainments within the Vail? Would Christ have begg'd of God, both the discovery and impartment of his Glory to his Members, had not both these been highly valued by him? *Joh.* xvii.22,24. Will not Christ (think we) count it his Honour, to have his own produced in open Court as Signs and Wonders? *Heb.*ii.13. to bring his Sons to Glory? *vers.* 10. and to have that Church for which he gave himself, and which he loved so dearly, presented to himself a glorious Church, not having

having ſpot or wrinkle, or any ſuch thing; but holy and without blemiſh? *Epheſ.* v. 25--27. And to ſee us fixed in his own Preſence, as the eternal ſtately Monuments of his magnificent and victorious Grace & Love? What was the Plea wherewith he accented his dying Prayer for his, that God would charge his ſpecial Providence with them, but this, *that I am glorified in them?* John xvii.10. And will the Head be glorified by being eternally parted from his Members? Where lies the Glory of a Teacher, but in the Wiſdom of his Scholars? and could Chriſt be glorified in making his expert in the Doctrine of Lies and Forgeries? What! bring Men to diſcern and credit & rely upon what only was deluſive! How can we learn this as a *Truth* in Jeſus, *that we ſhall live with him for ever*, when no ſuch thing ſhall come to paſs? *I have told you—that when it comes to paſs, ye might believe*, Joh.xiv.29. The Signs which God gave of a falſe Prophet under the Law, were either ſpeaking what was abſo-

absolutely false; or Truth, to countenance Irreligion or Idolatry. And can either of these be charged on Christ, and judged to be his Glory? Wherein consists the Glory of a Priest, but in the acceptance and success of what he regularly offereth to the determined Ends thereof? And can Christ our great High Priest be glorified as a Priest for ever, whose Sacerdotal Faithfulness could never bring up those unto himself in Heaven, for whom, and to which End he did declaredly offer up himself? *Heb.* ix. 12, 15, 24, 28. And wherein is Christ glorified as a King, if his Loyal Subjects must not abide with him for ever? *John* xv. 10, 11. *Heb.* v. 9. 2 *Tim.* iv. 6, 8. When he delivereth up the Kingdom to the Father, hath he no Subjects to produce, fitted unto the Felicities and Employments of his own Glorious Presence? And can he be glorified that hath no Subjects to adore him for his governing them so well? And how can he be glorified as the Captain of the Hosts of God in the

great

great War with Satan, if he must sit in Heaven alone, and have no victorious Followers to produce and shew therein, as proofs of his heroick, skilful, faithful Conduct and Atchievements? 1 *Joh.* iii. 8. *Rom.* viii. 18, 35--39. And how can Christ be glorified in and by his Saints, unless they see what God hath done for him, and in what Royal State he sits, inhabiting the Praises, and (perhaps) ordering the Affairs, and darting forth that Glory which must diffuse it self through all the Regions and Inhabitants of that blessed World above? He must be glorified and admired at, and will be so when we are brought to see his Face, to bear his Image, to share in the Visions, Services, and Fruitions of that State, all which shall to the Life express his Interest in God's Heart, and ours in his Heart; and what a Friend God is to him, and he to us: So that with Christ we are sure to be.

III. *The*

III. *The Uſefulneſs of this Paſſage.*

1. O what Attractives have we to a Heavenly Mind and Life! Chriſt and a Kingdom with him! Who would not breath and ſtrive to reach that bleſſed State? 2 *Cor.* 5. 8, 9. O let that Paſſage in 1 *Cor.* 15. 58. be well conſidered, concocted, and digeſted by you, ſo as to make you every way greatly conformable thereto: and let not Head, Inheritance and Hearts be parted. Did not *Paul* bear this Truth upon his Heart, and court us all to follow him in the heavenlineſs of his Mind and Life? *Phil.* 3. 14, 15. So lovely is the Lord of Glory, and ſo eminently doth the great God tranſmit his Glory even through the Humane Nature of our glorified Redemer, as that the Comforts of the Heavenly State will be exceedingly abated, were not his glorious Preſence there. And when he comes from Heaven to judg the World, the Hoſts and Citizens of that

that bleſſed State will joyfully attend his motions, 1 *Theſſ.* 3. 13. *Mat.* 25. 31.

2. If there be no Love to Chriſt, there would be no Joy in Heaven. Thoſe that have ſtumbl'd at his Holineſs, will be confounded at his Glory, *Mark* 8. 34. to 38. The Crown of Life and Glory is reſerv'd for, and ſhall be only given to thoſe that are lovers of his Appearance. For who can think that the Glories of the Heavenly State, and the Pleaſures of beholding Chriſt therein, can be *their* Portion, upon *whom* the great Sentence of *Anathema Maranatha* (i. e. curſed *till the Lord come*) is paſt? 1 *Cor.* 16. 22. Heaven cannot countenance and reward Contempt of Chriſt. The Son of Righteouſneſs, Heaven's Glory, and the Temple of that bliſsful State above, muſt either be the Heart's Delight, or Chriſt and Heaven can be no Portion.

3. No Chriſt! no Heaven. Heaven muſt needs be loſt where Chriſt is

miss'd of, *Act.* 4. 12. No Christ! no entrance into Glory: for Heaven is called *the Glory of our Lord Jesus Christ*, 2 *Thess.* 2. 14. Christ must be glorifi'd, if ever Heaven be reach'd. The Lord from Heaven is Lord of Heaven, *Matth* 28. 18, 19. And he must be *Crowned and own'd as Lord* in Hearts, and as the only Holy One of God, by those to whom he will give the Crown of Life. The Key of Heaven is in his Hand, and he will let in none but faithful Subjects. He cannot bear the presence of the Sons of *Belial* there, nor hath he any Mansions for them: they are too contrary to his Holiness, to have admission into his Presence. To let in rotten Hearts, would be to patronize and crown Rebellion. And is it meet that the Cross, the Crown, and Glory of the Son of God should serve the Devil? What! shall Christ prostitute his Blood and Scepter unto the first-born of Apostacy and Wickedness, or to the Seed thereof?

4. Then

4. Then Chriſt in Heaven ſhould be addreſs'd unto, to lift up Hearts and Perſons thither. Thus *Stephen* ſaw the Lord in Heaven, and begg'd his gracious help, and that not without ſucceſs, *Act* 7. 55 to 59. It is not every Arm, no nor any Arm but Chriſt's, that is fit to deal with ſuch dark heavy Souls as ours, ſo as to lift them up, and let them into Heaven, *Acts* 4. 12. *Jude* 24, 25. O then, deſponding Hearts, go make your moans to Chriſt, look up to him with your Hearts in your Eyes, and cry, *Fain would I come to thee, but cannot*; *Jeſus thou Son of* David *help*; *and thou who ruleſt all things, if thou canſt do any thing, who art the revealed Arm of God to bring great things to paſs, O have compaſſion on me, and raiſe up Heart and Soul and all to thee.* Mark 9. 22. Chriſt cry'd to God, as to one able to ſave from Death, *and he was heard*, Heb. 5. 7. Cry you to Jeſus Chriſt, for he can ſave you to the uttermoſt, *Heb.* 7. 25. Lifts at the laſt and deadlieſt pinches, are the moſt ſa-

tisfying and endearing Lifts. Remember, that a dying Christ once bare a Malefactor from the Cross to Heaven, and bravely rescu'd him from great destruction, and fixt him in his own Presence; *This day thou shalt be with me in Paradise.* O it was a Blessing won by Prayer, and that to Christ himself, *Luk.* 23. 42, 43.

5. Then Heaven should have no Rivals if Christ be there: to be with Christ is far better, and that abandons all Comparisons, *Phil.* 1. 23. Christ knew the purest Mansions where they were. Below they could not be, for Sin hath chang'd the Glory of all lower things to shame and blackness: And little is there in them now, save Names and Shadows; and till these fly away, *Christ, and our Life with him, is still hid in God,* Cant. 4. 6. *Col.* 3. 2 to 4. And should not our Hearts then be gone to Heaven, and bound for those most vast and glorious Regions, where our Dear Lord will keep his Residence for ever? What! Christ on his

his Throne, concerned, and preparing for gathering up all his Favorites to himſelf! and we not courted from a Dung-hill! all the World without one Chriſt is but a Trifle. No Chriſt, no worth in things; what Heart then for them! thoſe Joys, Relations, Gifts, Poſſeſſions and Accompliſhments are but vain and ſmall; nothing but dangerous Charms and Pageantries, whoſe Soul and Savour the Lord of Glory is not, *Phil.* 3. 7, 8. Prize things as they ſpeak Chriſt; for all the World without him is not worth one Heart; there is neither Gain nor Glory in it.

6. Were Heaven poſſeſs'd by Chriſtleſs Hearts, yet would Content be wanting. Frowns from the Maſter of the Feaſt would ſpoil the pleaſing Reliſhes of the Banquet. One, *Friend, how cam'ſt thou in hither?* would make men ſit at Table with little Confidence, and leſs Joy, *Mat.* 22. 12.

7. The Hopes of raiſed quickned Hearts are ſafe, and may be great. Chriſt, in the midſt of what we hope

for, may and ſhould quiet all. *Heb.* 6. 19, 20. It's pity ſuch a Paſſage ſhould be paſs'd over without a conſiderate pauſe. Hath Chriſt broke through the Vail, and is he got within it, to leave our Souls without an Anchor of Hope, that may prove ſure and ſtedfaſt? Can Chriſt enter Heaven for us, and then forget his Work? Can the Fore-runner quite deſert thoſe lively and ſolicitous Members, that breath and ſtrive ſo much to trace and to tread his Steps after him? He that hath loſt his Blood below, what! hath he loſt his Heart above? ſurely our Head was never crown'd to ſhame his Members Hopes, and Joys. Our expectations of that State may be invigorated greatly by this, *That Chriſt our Hope is ſet upon his Throne therein. Chriſt is our bleſſed Hope*, Tit. 2. 13. *According to our earneſt expectation and our hope in him, we cannot be aſham'd*, Phil. 1. 20 to 23. & 3. 20. It is *by Chriſt that our Hope is laid up in Heaven*, Col. 1. 5. *He makes the Promiſe ſure to all the Seed*,

Seed, Rom. 5. 10. Christ came from Heaven to be a Ransom, and so he was, *Heb.* 9. 15. and he is in Heaven to plead his Wounds, and by his Intercession to animate and succeed the regular Claims and Expectations of all his Members, *Rom.* 8. 34, 35. *Up then with Hearts and Hopes*; and bid defiance unto all Discouragements. Christ by his entrance into Heaven, and by his possessing it, as our raised and exalted Head, hath given one Lift; and surely then, his next lift will effectually bear up all. Savoury, full, and pertinent is that both witty and weighty Passage in *Tertullian de Resurrectione Carnis*, cap. 51. *Quemadmodum enim nobis Arrhabonem reliquit, ita & à nobis Arrhabonem carnis accepit & vexit in Cælum; pignus totius summæ illuc quandoque redigendæ securæ estote caro & sanguis. Usurpâstis & cælum & regnum Dei in Christo.* The earnest of the Spirit left, and the earnest of Flesh carri'd up to Heaven; a Pledg that all shall once be fetch'd up thither. The

Kingdom of God, and Heaven poſſeſt in Chriſt, makes all ſecure. O then let Fleſh and Hearts, *both reſt in hope*; for Chriſt in Heaven will fetch us all to Heaven: for there at God's right Hand ſtands Chriſt to plead and vindicate, *Act.* 7. 55. and there he ſits to hear, diſpenſe and rule; *Heb.* 1. 3, 13, 14. And if he fail in both, then may the lively Hopes (1 *Pet.* 1. 3.) of quickened Hearts (*Eph.* 2. 5). expire and die. And if ſo, then where is our Anchor ſure and ſtedfaſt reaching to that within the Vail? Was not the Heart of our aſcending Lord and Head exceeding mindfull of his Friends, and warm toward them? *Joh.* 20. 17. and cool'd it by the way? *Heb.* 4. 15. No ſurely, all that are truly and firmly Chriſt's, alway lie warm upon his Heart. Let him be where he will, though in the heights of all his Glory, he is yet *our High Prieſt*, Heb. 4. 14. & 8. 1. *Our Life*, Col. 3. 4. *Our Head*, Eph. 1. 22, 23. *Our Peace*, Eph. 2. 14. *Our Hope*, 1 Tim. 1. 1. *Our Lord*, 1. Cor. 1. 2. *Our Saviour*,

Saviour, Tit. 1. 4. *The Shepherd and Biſhop of our Souls*, 1 Pet. 2. 25. *and our Advocate*, 1 John 2. 1. And can Chriſt in Heaven, *ſtatedly and avouchedly*, under ſuch near and ſure and dear Relations to us, ſuffer our Hopes to fall? ſurely his Exaltation puts no period to his Relation to us, nor to thoſe Bowels that are proper to it; nor to thoſe Expectations that are built upon it. It's true, his Joys are high, his Truſt is great: but it is as true, that his Heart is commenſurate with and anſwers both: nor will his Kingdom pleaſe him without *his* Bride: he will ſtep once more from Heaven to fetch Her to Himſelf, *John* 14. 3.

8. O what an Antidote is this Hope againſt the Snares and Fears of things below! 2 *Cor.* 5. 1. the Croſs is heavy, and Hearts are ſoon unfixed; when Heaven, and Chriſt therein, and our determinate abode with him, are not our lively Hope and ſtated Poize. The Croſs can make no breach, while Chriſt in Heaven thus ſets his Heart upon us: and we have ſent our Hearts intirely

intirely after him, & keep them there, *Rom.* 8. 34, 35. *Heb.* 10. 34. And Pleaſures can do but little hurt, whilſt this great Hope reliſhes duly with us. All the Delights of *Pharaoh*'s Court could never reach the Heart of *Moſes*. When Chriſt and Heaven had got his Eye and fixt it, *Heb.* 11. 25, 26. Hearts ſhould be under their reſtraint in lawful Mirth, and at enmity with ſinful Mirth, during the abſence of their Lord, *Mat.* 9. 15. *Mephiboſheth* grew careleſs of himſelf until his Lord returned in peace, 2 *Sam.* 19. 24. No joy but in his Maſter's preſence: And ſhall not Chriſt in Heaven correct and moderate our Joys in things below? Groans to be ſtript of Earth, and Fleſh, and to be gone to Chriſt in Heaven ſhould be the deepeſt Groans. And truly, Sirs, if Chriſt in Heaven have not your Hearts, they will be prone to Surfeits or Diſtractions. You either will be tunn'd with Wind, or drunk with Vanity, or wrack'd with Cares and Fears. Hearts pitcht on Chriſt

Chriſt in Heaven, know where to be full and welcom, when things below have ſhew'd their beſt, and done their worſt. They have a Glory that will pierce the darkeſt Cloud, and reach the greateſt Deep, 2 *Cor.* 1. 5. Their bittereſt Herbs, and ſharpeſt Agonies, may poſſibly be their entertainment at their laſt Paſſover: but theſe their ſhort-liv'd Sorrows are but to uſher in, and aggravate their Maſter's Joys. Pleaſures poſſeſt and kept by Chriſt for them, and to be poſſeſt by them in his own immediate Preſence, muſt needs be great. O Chriſtians, remember Heaven, and Chriſt therein; and what he is there preparing for you; and fear neither Plots, nor Strokes, nor Rumors, 1 *Pet.* 1. 4, to 7. *Mat.* 5. 10, to 12. Let your exalted Head, and this your elevating Hope, diſtil ſuch influences upon your exercis'd Hearts, as to make you valiant for your Prize, exalted in your Aims, triumphant in your Hopes and Sufferings, and evermore inſulting over the Cheats and Dangers

Dangers that attend you. He ſells his Head and Hopes for thirty Pieces, that is intangl'd with or unhing'd by any thing below this Head and Heritage, and theſe things above. Sure Chriſt in Heaven, ſo evidently intent upon your being brought to live where he is, wants neither Heart, nor Worth, nor Joys, to make you know and to acknowledg that he is a Non-ſuch Friend; and though rough-handed *Eſau* may be the firſt-born of your Entertainments here, yet *Jacob* hath him by the Heel, and ſhall ſupplant him. *Suffer and reign*, theſe are the terms of Life, the Royal Law of Hope, 2 *Tim.*2.12. Ought not we (as well as Chriſt) to ſuffer and ſo to enter into Glory? *Luk.* 24. 26. with *Rom.* 8. 17. Muſt not he follow Chriſt that deſigns to reach what he hath got? *John.* 12. 26. *Heb.* 12. 2. What though the Way be foul and rugged? What ſhould diſcourage you in thoſe Paths, where every ſtep you take is an advance toward Chriſt in Heaven?

your

Your Faith in Chriſt, and Hope of Heaven, are as the Dawnings of this Day to you: and every look at Chriſt in Glory, is as a Lift toward Heaven, and as a Foretaſt of it. A look at Chriſt in Glory bore up the Spirit of that Proto-martyr *Stephen* above the debaſements which carnal Fears produce in others, and would otherwiſe have brought him under.

9. Why ſhould not Things above make us remember and ſend our Hearts to Chriſt above? had not Chriſt bought the Prize of Heaven, *Eph.* 1. 11, 14. and made our way thereto, *Heb.* 10. 19, 20. and peirced the Vail, *Heb.* 9. 8. and won and worn the Crown, through his own Blood, *Heb.* 1. 3. our being with our Lord in Glory had been beyond our reach and hope, 1 *Pet.* 1.3,4. An open Heaven for us coſt Chriſt a wounded Heart. He *was poor to make us rich*, 2 Cor. 8. 9. Our ſprings of Hopes and Joys came from this cloven *Lehi* (if I may allude to *Judg.* 15. 19.) where the Spring that God clave was not

not in the Jaw-bone, but in the place called *Lehi*, becauſe of the miraculous execution that was done by the *Jaw-bone* of an Aſs, (as *Lehi* ſignifies); and ſhould not Heaven in hopes inthrone our Lord in Heart? 2 *Cor.* 5. 14. It was this made the Apoſtle's Heart ſo warm and active; *Wherefore we labour*, &c. Verſ. 9. *Good-Will* indeed *toward Men*, when ſuch good things were purchaſt for them, *Luk.* 2. 14. O then Chriſtians, if there be either Worth or Love, Bowels or Bounty in that Heavenly State, ſo aggravated by our there *ever being with the Lord*, let all your Hearts be evermore for Chriſt. He walk'd in the *Valley of the Shadow of Death, that you might fear no evil*, and felt the Pangs and Strokes of Death, with all the loads and bitterneſs thereof conſiſtent with the dignity, innocence, and deſigns of ſuch a Perſon, as the Son of God was, ingaged in ſuch Mediatorial Work, and all purſuant to this great Deſign, *That Life and Immortal-*

לחי
Maxilla.

lity

lity might be intail'd upon us, who our ſelves could not live till he himſelf had undergone and conquer'd Death. Nor would he bring us to himſelf, but under ſuch advantages, and upon ſuch terms as ſhould evidently and greatly miniſter to univerſal ſatisfaction and renown. So black was that thick Cloud wherein this Sun of Righteouſneſs did ſet and paſs into his glorious State, thus to prepare our way to himſelf in Heaven, as that the ſight thereof made his awakened Soul to tremble and to ſolicite God for help; *Mark* 14. 34. *Heb.* 5. 8, 9. Yet through this Cloud he wrought his Way, to diffuſe his Glory through the Heavenly Regions; and to make the Hoſts and the Inhabitants thereof the amazed Witneſſes of his triumphant Grace and Faithfulneſs: And thence to afford thoſe Influences which ſhould prepare us for, and ſuit us to that State. Bleſſed is Heaven that Chriſt is in it, and bleſſed are holy Hearts below that Chriſt in Heaven is theirs, and for them.

them. Christ there inthron'd, and imploy'd for us, should loosen all our Hearts from all save what his Heart is upon. His Work and Presence in that holy Place, hath both its Voice and Force. He speaks not now to us in roaring Thunder-claps from the burning Mount; nor doth that *Blood through which God brought him from the Dead*, and consecrated the High Priest of our Profession to his most noble Work within the Vail, cry like the Blood of *Abel* for Revenges, to fill our Hearts with Enmity or Anguish; but it is an alluring grateful Whisper from betwixt the Cherubims of Grace and Glory; a Call to *Pisgah* thence to behold *Emanuel*'s Land, that promised and expected State of Holiness and Joy: hence therefore let us send our Hearts to Christ as a poor Widow's Mite, only to acknowledg our Obligations to him, and to testify how much we love our Lord and Head. And, O thou Prince of Life and Glory, thou Oracle of Truth, the sealed

Amen

Amen of all God's Promiſes, and of our glorious Expectations; thou Conqueror of Graves, of Hearts, and Hell; whom to behold is our great Hope and Joy, (for without Thee, the Prince of Life, we cannot live, and never look to know what it is indeed to live till we be got to Thee). Lend us a Beam of Light to view thee by; that every Look may melt our Hearts, and make them ſhine and burn. That thus our Admirations and Affections may bear ſome ſmall proportion to their Object, and more effectually ſecure us from loſing Hearts below, and throwing them away upon unworthy things. We loſe Affections in miſtaken worth; and thou get'ſt little elſe hereby but Slights and Stabs, and all becauſe we know not Thee the Lord of Glory. How little is thy Love admir'd by us, becauſe we feel it not! how little are we affected with thee, becauſe we have not ſeen thee! how little do we bemoan our abſence from thee, becauſe we are ſo little appre-

henſive of what thy glorious Preſence ſo liberally produces and diſpenſes! how eaſily are we courted and prevail'd upon to forget thee, becauſe we do ſo little think upon, and are ſo little affected with thy Wounds below, and thy Worth and Joys above? Eyes have not ſeen, Hearts cannot love. O lift, and help, and warm, and fix, and conquer all. O let our Hearts be made as faſt and pure as Heaven. Let preparations be compleat in Hearts, as well as in thoſe Manſions of eternal Glory with thy ſelf, which thou haſt order'd and incourag'd us to expect. O let not Grace and Love, as large as Heaven, be under our Feet any more, but upon our Hearts. Could ever Heaven be ours, or found and valu'd by us as Heaven indeed, without thy Sufferings, Triumph, Grace and Preſence? And can we think on Heaven indeed, and yet forget the Throne of Majeſty and Grace that is there, and him that ſits thereon, acting purſuantly to this delightful Hope, that we ſhall ſee him

in

in his Meridian Glory, and be with him for ever?

10. Let nothing have or influence your Hearts below, but that which ſuits the Heart of Chriſt above. All muſt be like the Lord that are to live with him; *and he that hath this Hope in him, muſt purify himſelf as Chriſt is pure,* 1 Joh. 3. 2, 3. Whatever Chriſt died to ſtart below, he lives above to propagate, to vindicate, and compleat. He hath as true a Heart for Godlineſs now as ever: and he was call'd the *Holy Child* after his Exaltation, *Acts* 4. 27. Chriſt's Heart is pure, ſo are his Joys; for they are the Joys of Holineſs in its utmoſt luſter, vigour, and extent. You muſt be pure, or Chriſt and you muſt part; the Conſtitution of the heavenly State admits of no diſorder. His holy Soul abhors what ſeems to ſhake his Father's Throne. He cannot bear it, that a filthy Soul ſhould ſtand before him, for *God's Name is in him,* Exod. 23. 21. *In that he lives, he lives to God,* Rom. 6. 10. He dy'd

with Holineſs upon his Heart; and as a Martyr for it, as well as to make an atonement for us, 1 *Pet.* 2. 22, 23. With a pure Heart he went to Heaven; and can you think that Purity can waſt and rot, when fac'd with the moſt immediate Viſions of God, and entertain'd with all things moſt expreſſive of God's complacency in it? Surely God's greateſt Favours muſt bear the cleareſt Characters and Signatures of his eſſential Purity and Holineſs. Hath Holineſs loſt its Intereſt in Heaven, ſince Chriſt went thither? Or hath Sin gotten ground by Chriſt's aſcent to Glory? O Sinners, be no longer doting Fools, and ſtupid Sots. Lay by your Venom, and *cleanſe your Hearts and Hands*, Jam. 4. 8. 1 Cor. 6. 9, to 11. The *Heart*, the *Blood*, the *Inheritance*, the *Crown* and *Triumphs* of our Lord are all engag'd to revive Holineſs in the World, *Pſal.* 130. 4. Dote not upon deceitful Riches; *Chriſt is the Pearl of Price, by whom you are to be inrich'd in every thing.* Let not the Mammon

Mammon of Unrighteouſneſs uſurp the Throne of Chriſt, the over-valued World is a perfect Enemy to Chriſt, to Heaven and Heavenlineſs. Be not perplexed nor over-charg'd with Cares, be not intangl'd whilſt you are allow'd to be imploy'd. Take heed of *Delilaes*, leſt you loſe your Locks, and be bereav'd of your Chriſtian Strength and Hopes. Fear not the Frowns, prize not the Smiles of Mortal Duſt beyond Divine Allowance. Chriſt hates Competitors; Chriſt did it not below, he loves it not above. Be not buri'd alive in Sloth, *Rom.* 12. 11. there is nothing in Heaven but Life and Joy in full conformity to all the Laws and Purpoſes of that compleat Theocracy. Diligence brings in rich Delights; 'tis Sloth that makes Hell ſo full, and Heaven ſo empty. Be not high-minded, neither court nor cheriſh Self in any dreſs by Pride and Rage. *Haman*'s preferment made him but high enough to reach a Halter. Learn of Chriſt, *Mat.* 11. 29. Heaven could not bear the

Pride of Angels, no more can Chriſt endure the Pride of Man. Pleaſe not your ſelves, or others, till you have anſwer'd all your Maſter's Claims, *Rom.* 15. 1, 2, 3. *Gal.* 1. 10. Be knit to nothing but to your Lord in Heaven; for why ſhould he be made an Underling or Cipher here below? Chriſt ours in Heaven! a better Patrimony and Inheritance than States and Kingdoms here. Be more ſollicitous about the temper, tendency, and genuine Iſſues of your Hearts and Ways, than about the Events of Providence, 2 *Cor.* 5. 9, 10. Your beſt Concernments are with Chriſt; if they ſucceed, you cannot loſe Treaſures above, and your exalted Head in *Bonds*, in *Power*, and in *Poſſeſſion* to ſecure them, ſpeak you too ſafe and rich to be undone. Be ſilent Proſtrates at the foot of Chriſt; if his preſence be your Happineſs, he muſt needs be much above you every way: therefore obſerve the Words, the Looks, the Steps of Chriſt, and let them rule you: And let his Diſpen-

Diſpenſations here below be all admir'd by you, and reſted in. Chriſt is in Heaven about your Work; and that he be pleaſed by you, doth moſt concern you, and beſt become you. And when you come to be with him for ever, how deeply and quickly will he make you ſenſible of that great Wiſdom, wonderful Grace, and mighty Power, which brought you ſafely to himſelf in Glory.

11. And O what a Figure will Chriſt then make in Heaven, when that State is compleatly filled, and when he hath gathered all his Family up to Glory? 2 *Pet.* 1. 11. If in thoſe preparatory Scenes of Providence wherein the Redeemer addreſt himſelf to Action, and began his glorious Atchievements, and was priviledged to open the Sealed Book, there were ſuch Acclamations, and ſolemn Congratulations of this his peculiar Priviledg & Prerogative by all in Heaven & Earth; and if there were ſuch proſtrate Venerations of him, as we find in *Rev.* 4. 8--11. & 5. 9--14. and this conjunctly with

his Father: How will his Name and Glory be aggrandized when all his Favorites ſhall be with him? All the Myſteries of Godlineſs relate to Chriſt, and have their undoubted Aggravations from him, 1 *Tim.* 3. 16. and how wondrouſly glorious hath God repreſented him to us below? *Col.*1.15--19. & 2.2,3,9,10. *Heb.*1.2--13. *Rev.* 1.5,6. *John* 14. 6. And if theſe τὰ ἐπίγεια, theſe earthly things; [theſe ſhadowings forth of Chriſt and of his Kingdom to us, even by Schemes accommodated to our Capacities in this our dark and diſtant State] be looked upon as ſcarcely to be credited by Maſters in *Iſrael*, and yet ſo wonderful in the Eyes of the diſcerning Chriſtian: What would the τὰ ἐπουράνια be then thought to be, were they diſcovered to us in words more ſuited to their Excellency, than to our Capacity? *John* 3. 12. with 1 *Cor.* 1. 23, 24. & 2. 9--14. & 2.12,2--4. We find great notices taken of him by the Heavenly State whilſt in this outward Court, mini-

miniſtring in the Port and poſture of a Servant: For as the Spirit of Prophecy foretold him, Types repreſented him, and the Word of Promiſe entitled us to the hopes and benefits of his Appearance, and propitious Mediation: So the Spirit forms his Body, Angels declare his Birth, Miracles atteſt his Dignity, Doctrines, and Authority, and Ability to form us for, and bring us to Himſelf. Nature obeys him, Devils fly before him, *Moſes* and *Elias* talk with him; Souls come in by Multitudes, and value nothing like his Perſon, Conduct, Government, and Grace. God owns him as *his Son*, as his *Royal Oracle* and *Agent*, by a Voice from Heaven, 2 *Pet.*1.16--21. 1 *Joh.*5.6--12. and all the Inſtitutions and Tranſactions of the Kingdom of God amongſt Men, muſt have the Name of Chriſt enſtamp'd upon them. And when Chriſt had finiſhed his Courſe, and Work below, God raiſes him from the Dead, and ſhews him openly; commands the Angels to worſhip him, and

to

to report his Reſurrection: makes this the great Baſe and Pillar of his Goſpel-Kingdom; carries him up to Heaven, many hundreds of credible Witneſſes beholding his Aſcenſion; and ſets him at his own right Hand, putting the Reigns of all Government into his Hands. And then the Father ſends the Holy Spirit, in the *Son's Name*, to glorify him, (as Chriſt had ſaid before, *John* 16. 13--15.) to ſeal this Truth, to enable Perſons to declare and prove it, and to make the Goſpel proſperous in its great Deſign. But as to Chriſt himſelf, he in the heavenly *Places* and *Affairs* (for ἐν τοῖς ἐπουρανίοις imports both) *ſits far above all Principality, Power, Might, Dominion, and every Name that is named in——even the World to come, having all things under his Feet; becauſe he is given as Head over all things to his Church, which is his Body, the fulneſs of him that filleth all in all,* Epheſ. 1. 20--23. Hence *the whole Family in Heaven and Earth is named of him,* Eph. 3. 15. The Church in

in the compleatneſs of its Triumphant State, is called *his Everlaſting Kingdom*, 2 Pet. 1. 11. And *when he ſhall have put down all Rule, Authority and Power, he will deliver up the Kingdom to the Father*, as a fit Preſent to the Majeſty of Heaven, as a clear Proof and Monument of his own Mediatorial Faithfulneſs, and as fit Subjects of his own Paternal Government and Delight, or as his acquired Inheritance to poſſeſs for ever, 1 *Cor.* 15. 24--28. For who can any way imagine, that the delivery of theſe Subjects to the Father ſhall be the depoſing of the Son from his triumphant Government, that well conſiders Chriſt as placed by God *upon the ſame Throne with himſelf?* Rev. 3. 21. Is not Chriſt ſaid *to reign for ever and ever?* Rev. 11. 15. O what a Pleonaſm (or fulneſs of expreſſion) is there in that paſſage! *Epheſ.* 3. 21. It is a Doxology richly phraſed, and that (as in the Greek, εἰς πάσας τὰς γενεὰς τοῦ αἰῶνος τῶν αἰώνων) whereto I never yet read or heard of any Parallel in any Greek

Greek Author. See also 2 *Pet.* 3. 18. so vast is the reach of the inspiring Spirit, so deep the Thoughts, so full the Heart of the inspired Pen-man; because so great the Dignity and Prerogatives of our enthroned and glorified Redeemer in this his Day and Kingdom. What Eye so sharp and strong on Earth, as to comprehend, or tolerably to reach the sense of that great Passage, in 1 *Tim.* 6. 14-16. where *Timothy* is charged to keep the Commandment—*till the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ*, (mind now what follows) *which in his Times he shall shew, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of Kings, and Lord of Lords; who only hath Immortality, dwelling in Light, which no Man can approach unto, whom no Man hath seen, nor can see; to whom is* (as well as *be*) *Honour and Power everlasting? Amen.* And here, O that my *heart* was equal to what poor purblind I discern in this great Passage, as shewing what notice must and will be taken of Jesus Christ hereafter.

after. For tho all theſe Attributions be made to God the Father, yet will this glorious Name appear exceedingly in the Revelation of the Son from Heaven, who is ſaid to come in the Glory of his Father, *Luk.*9.26. And we cannot think his Heavenly Glory to be leſs than what attends him on his Throne of Judgment. And when all Eyes ſhall ſee him upon his Throne in Heaven; what Wonders ſhall we then behold! the cleareſt Mirrour, and moſt genuine Image of the Inviſible God, ſhedding abroad his Glory throughout that perfect World; and by the viſible Luſter of his Eminencies, the boundleſs Diſpenſations of his Love, and the moſt accurate Government of his entire Family and Kingdom, will he manifeſt *his Intereſt* in God, and *our Intereſt* in him, to be ſo great and grateful to the whole Society, as to command and gain all Hearts, Eyes, Services and Doxologies.

12. O what a Prize have we to make improvement of? What! live with

with Christ for ever! and then with such Solemnities be caught up to him to meet him in the Air, so as to go away with him to Glory, and to part no more! Is such a Truth and State only to exercise our speculative Searches, to entertain our wanton Fancies, to minister to discursive Entertainments and bold Disputes; or only by some politick Pretences thereunto, to serve our Carnal Interests thereupon! Think we that Christ, in his Descent from Heaven, his Return thither, his Exaltation there, or his determined and declared Purpose to enstate us with himself therein, only intended that we should trifle with such Matters, or make them Engines for our ambitious and selfish Aims and Purposes? No greater prophanation and abuse of such a *State*, and *Hope*, and *Friend in Heaven* than this, that Christ himself should be dishonoured, and his great Aim and End concerning us neglected and defeated, by an ill Temper and Behaviour in and from us. Hence then

suffer

ſuffer a word of Exhortation, and that to theſe following things.

1. Clear up your Notions of this State and Hope; know with whom and where you are to be, and to what Purpoſes, *Col.* 3. 1--4. You are to be with Chriſt in his Eternal Kingdom, there to behold his Glory, in all the Heights and Accuracies of full conformity to him, that even there your raiſed and compleated Beings may ſerve the Purpoſes, and reap the Comforts of your Stations there. *God's Houſhold is called a Building fitly framed together, here growing up* (and there grown up) *to be an holy Temple in the Lord; and all are built together for an Habitation of God through the Spirit,* Epheſ. 2. 21, 22. And theſe *Epheſians* (as others are) were to be filled *unto* all the Fulneſs of God; [εἰς πᾶν τὸ πλήρωμα τοῦ θεοῦ] *Eph.* 3. 19. And what doth this inſinuate? The uſe and luſter of the whole Temple is not to be confined and aſcribed unto every Part. Nor are all the Parts to be in every thing alike; it is rather Sym-

Symmetry and Harmony, than Identity or Equality, wherein the beautifulneſs of that Building lies. And indeed, variety of Parts, well laid and kept together, ſhews greatly the Skill and Wiſdom of the Architect. God himſelf only knows what vaſt Numbers of Inhabitants that State contains; *Ten thouſand times ten thouſand, and thouſands of thouſands,* Rev. 5. 11. and, *a thouſand thouſands miniſtred to him; and ten thouſand times ten thouſand ſtood before him.* Dan. 7. 10. And theſe vaſt Multitudes are all digeſted into their ſeveral proper Ranks and Orders. Hence, *Thrones, Dominions, Principalities, Powers,* Coloſ. 1. 16. *Might,* and *Names named in the World to come,* Epheſ. 1. 21. And the faln Angels are ſaid to have left their *Principality,* τὸν ἑαυτῶν ἀρχὴν, Jude 6. Thus Chriſt aſſigns Authority in his Day; to ſome, *over ten,* to others, *over five Cities,* Luk. 19. 17--19. *There is* (ſaith the Apoſtle) *one glory of the Sun, another of the Moon, another Glory of the*

the Stars, which themſelves alſo in their Glory, differ each from other. So alſo is the Reſurrection of the Dead, 1 Cor. 15. 41, 42. And will not theſe be placed and uſed according to their different degrees in Glory, in the Kingdom of God and of Chriſt? It ſeems very improbable to me, *(pace aliorum)* that all in Heaven are equal in their Capacities, Stations, and Circumſtances; *this only* Obiter; *and with all ſubmiſſion to farther Diſcoveries and better Judgments.* But that which is mainly aimed at from the Apoſtle's hint, [*unto all the fulneſs*] is this, that we are here to *grow up to all the Fulneſs of God,* viz. to that degree of proficiency, and at laſt Perfection, which may beſt fill up and anſwer our fixed Place and Station in the living Temple of the great God. And then accordingly will God place and uſe us in the Heavenly Kingdom; whereinto, accordingly we are minded of *an abundant Entrance,* 2 Pet. 1. 11. But *to the main Concern.* Think not that Chriſt will

bring you to himself, to give you sensual Entertainments, or to exempt you from all further service to his Father and himself; or to feed and satisfy an arrogant and revengeful Temper in you, as if the Satisfactions and Advancements of that State only were to make you contemptuously to insult over those Enemies of yours who had vex'd or wronged you in the Flesh. Nor are you there only to sit still, and gaze at the beautiful Objects of that State; nor only to sing your vocal *Hallelujah's*; nor only to entertain the Majesty of the great *Jehovah*, and the visible Beauty of that World, *the Man Christ Jesus*, with Commendations and Applauses, as if your Oral Panegyricks could be your delight; for the highest flights of Speech are low, the most masculine vigour of Expression is but flat and languid; and the most intimate Inspections, and vastest reaches of created Intellects, are but short and narrow as to the Objects of your Praise and Wonder in the Heavens, *Neh.* 9. 5. *Job* 11. 7--9.

7--9. 'Tis true, Chriſt Jeſus *is the Image of the inviſible God*; and the Glory of the Divine Nature (perſonally or *bodily* dwelling in him in its Fulneſs, *Col.* 2. 9.) muſt ſuit its Emanations and Tranſmiſſions through the humane Nature, (and all its diſcoveries otherwiſe of it ſelf) unto the Capacities and Concerns of that moſt excellent Society above; which yet, as Creatures have their Bounds, (for no Nature can be infinite that is created). Whence we may eaſily infer, as I conceive, an infinite *reſidue* of Perfection, (if I may call it ſo) which never can be known by any meer Creature. And it is more than I can prove, that God neither hath made, nor can make a ſort of Beings, to whom he doth, or will, or may diſcover himſelf by a Name higher, and clothed with more lofty Attributions, than either we, or thoſe Spirits above (called *Angels*, from their Miniſtrations to this World) can reach, or are capacitated for. But, *De Deo vel vera dicere periculoſum.* I dread to

walk in the impoſſible or forbidden ſearches of the incomprehenſible Sourſe and Abyſs of Perfection, leſt I ſhould meet with that *ſevere and awful Reprimand*, *Who is this that darkens Counſel by Words without Knowledg?* Job 38. 2. But this may ſhew how little our Words or Thoughts can reach God's own eſſential Perfection. Yet is this Godhead united to *the Man Chriſt Jeſus*: But how, I ſolemnly profeſs I know not, though I believe it to be true, and think it eaſily demonſtrable from Sacred Writ: And I think it as copiouſly aſſerted, and plainly proved, as almoſt any Article of the Chriſtian Faith; and I take the Goſpel to have very little Myſtery comparatively, if ſo far diluted as to loſe this central Myſtery, 1 *Tim.* 3. 16. And hence it plainly follows, that *to be with the Lord*, is a great aggravation of the Glory and Delightfulneſs of the Heavenly State, it being not improbable to me that Chriſt himſelf will be the Mediator of *Fruition*, as he hath been of

of Acquiſition. And therefore to proceed; we cannot think, that *to be with Chriſt* infers a Peerage with him, or Partnerſhip in his Divine Excellencies and Prerogatives, *Rev.* 3. 21. We are to *worſhip him*, and not to *be worſhipped with him*, Rev. 5. 13. Phil. 2. 10, 11. John 5. 12, 13. What is Worſhip, but, *Obſequium alicui præſtitum propter excellentiam?* A reverent acknowledgment of Excellence, and fit Reſpects and Homage paid thereto? And if then Chriſt the Mediator be *God-Man*, hath he not *therein* the preeminence above all other Creatures in the Univerſe? and the Reſpects which muſt be paid thereto, what Worſhip will you call it? Names are to be ſuited unto things, they cannot otherwiſe duly repreſent them. Chriſt then as Mediator is more excellent than any meer Creature, therefore as a middle Perſon to be more regarded: And what then will you call this *over-plus of Reſpects?* (if I may call it ſo) I know we may *diſtinguiſh*, where we cannot *divide*;

and whether *Divine Worſhip* may fitly be diſtinguiſhed upon or not, I leave to the more accurate to determine. But I conceive that God expects, that the Humane Nature, *as individuated in that exalted Perſon Jeſus Chriſt*, ſhall have ſuch Honour paid thereto, as none beſides, in Heaven or Earth, ſhall be allowed to have. In a word, Chriſt *as Mediator*, is not *ſo great as God*, therefore the Worſhip muſt not riſe ſo high: Yet, *as Mediator*, he is above all Creatures, and more than they to be reſpected. Conſider well *Heb.*1.3--6. As *Man* there is Humane Excellence in its Height; as *God*, there is increated Excellence: As *Mediator*, there is a *ſitting at God's right Hand*: and he that ſits there, muſt and will be accordingly acknowledged, and had in reverence by all in Heaven. And now let us ſee a little what that State imports, that we may form right Notions of it. And here we will, 1. Premiſe the Excellence of *the Place*, as ſuited to all the Grandieurs of the State, *Epheſ.*

† 4.10.

4. 10. the Inheritance of the Saints *in Light*, Col. 1. 12. the *Building made by God*, 2 Cor. 5. 1. Heb.11.10,16. & 13.14. Joh.14.2. But where and how 'tis ſituated, divided and accommodated, no *Piſgah* high enough on Earth for us to ſee it from, *Rev.* 21. 9--23. & 22. 1--5. And, 2. the Perfections of the *Subjects* to make them receptive of that State. Defecated Souls, and Spiritual Bodies, *Heb.*12.14. *Mat.*5. 3. & 1 *John* 3. 3. with 1 *Cor.* 15. 50--54. 2 *Cor.* 4. 14. 1 *Theſſ.* 14. 14--17. For none muſt go with Chriſt to Glory, nor live with him for ever, whoſe Hearts and Lives are not for him whilſt here; and whoſe Spirits are not transform'd, and ſo adapted or ſuited to the Privileges and Miniſtrations of the Heavenly Kingdom, *Rev.*21.27. And therefore 'tis ſuppoſed and concluded, that the Conſtitution of the Soul be ſound and ſweet, and fit for its immediate entrance into Heaven, and its abode with Chriſt for ever, *Rom.*8.9-11. The Spirit of Chriſt imprinciples,

Providence exerciſes all theſe heavenly Principles; our Covenant-ſtate obliges us to the moſt lively exerciſe thereof: Habits are fix'd and ſtrengthned by Acts; and the Soul's firſt immediate look at Chriſt, compleats its Transformation; and then is it admitted into the preſence of its Lord. So that in ſtrictneſs of Thoughts and Speech, the Temper of the Perſon muſt be diſtinguiſh'd from his State, as that which qualifies him for his admiſſion thereinto. And then as to the Body, it muſt not *be Fleſh and Blood*, for that will be too weak and groſs for Chriſt his ſo glorious and majeſtick Preſence, and for the Viſions and Employments of the State above. *Saul* could not bear the Glory of Chriſt's perſonal Appearance to him, without aſtoniſhment and blindneſs, *Acts* 9. 3--12. And in his Extaſy he knew not where and what he was, embodied or not, 2 *Cor.* 12. 2, 3. And the appearance of an Angel made others as dead Men, *Mat.* 28. 2--4. And the Royal and Great Prophet, when he

ſaw

ſaw *his Glory*, cried out, *Wo is me, I am undone*, Iſa.6. 5. with *John* 12. 41. How ſtrangely did Chriſt's Transfiguration confound *Peter*, *James*, and *John*? Mark 9. 2--6. So that the Body muſt it ſelf be changed, in order to its meeting and being with the Lord, 1 *Cor.*15. 52, 53. Theſe things are then to be diſtinguiſhed from the State it ſelf, as needful Preparations for it. Now therefore to the State it ſelf; and here I ſhall avoid all fond Imaginations, and Conjectures, and ſpeak hereof as God ſhall enable me, and doth inſtruct me. This State muſt then include theſe things: (and how much more I know not.) 1. The Viſions of the Glory of our Lord; or, *beholding Chriſt in all his Glory*: And ſo our *being where he is*, Joh.17.24. and that, not *to aſtoniſhment and conſternation*, but *to delightful admiration*, John 16. 22. Jude 24. And here both Mind and Body have their looks at Chriſt to feaſt them both for ever. The ſymmetry and delicate Proportions of his Humane Body

Body, the Beauty of his Face, the Majesty of his Countenance, the Pleasingness of his Speech, the placid Aspects of his smiling Looks at us, the Glory of his Throne, the orderly Disposals, Attendances, and Ministrations of all his Favorites and Attendants; with all the awful and yet delightful decencies of his Gestures and Deportments towards all with him, and the Expressions of Divinity in all this. O what an ocular Entertainment will this amount unto! What shall our Souls say then to all his evident Prerogatives, his wise Conduct, his excellent Government, his bounteous Dispensations, his intimate Converses with us, and the delight he evidently takes in the Harmony and welfare of that State? And who knows what besides? But this I now remember was touch'd upon before. 2. The glorious Benefits and Pleasures that will result herefrom: There is *Glory given*, as well as *Glory seen*, John 17. 22. called *an Inheritance of the Saints in Light*, Col. 1. 12. the *Crown*

Crown of Life, Jam.1.12. A *Kingdom prepared to be inherited*, Mat.25.34. The *Joy of our Lord*, ver.21. *Fulneſs of Joy and Pleaſures for evermore*, Pſal.16.11. We ſhall be honourable & triumphing Members of the glorified Church in Heaven, and *there* and *ſuch* for ever; ſignalized with the Name *of God*, and of that perfected Corporation, and of our glorified Redeemer. Whether the Deity will (or can be) the Object of our immediate Viſion, I much doubt, and am prompted ſo to do, from 1 *Tim.* 1.17. & 6.16. I only ſay, *I doubt it much*, but I cannot judg my ſelf infallible; but, *when with Chriſt in Glory*, our Knowledg of God will be more clear than now, and have more deep Impreſſions, and livelier Influences upon the whole Man than now it hath. *We ſhall be like to Angels, being the Children of God, and of the Reſurrection*, Luk.20.36. for then the Privileges and Prerogatives of our adopted raiſed State, will be in our actual and full Poſſeſſion. We ſhall be ever under the ſmiles

ſmiles of infinite Love, and under the moſt invigorating Influences of *the God of Life*; whoſe conſtant overſhadowings of us ſhall draw forth all the vital Energies of our Faculties, (and perhaps of ſome Faculties which yet are latent in us, as being fitter for the Felicities and Employments of the *End*, than of the *Way*; which yet I rather offer than aſſert); and when exalted Faculties and Powers are placed amongſt ſuch glorious Objects, in ſuch vaſt multitudes, and with ſuch great variety; when we converſe and dwell with Angels, ſo numerous, excellent, and endearing; when we have ſuch glorious Entertainments and Employments with and for the Lord Redeemer; when we ſhall from himſelf receive immediately what he *here* promiſed, and hath *there* prepared for us; the Fruits and Harveſt of all our Sufferings, Labours, Prayers, and Hopes; when all our Dangers, Snares, Fears, Griefs and Maladies are gone; when all Chriſt's Enemies and ours are under-

foot;

foot; when the Divine Life, in its meridian Strength and Luſter, ſhews it ſelf; when all the Subjects of that State appear in their moſt accurate conformities unto their great Exemplar, *each one as Chriſt reſembling the Children of a King*, (as thoſe in a far lower ſenſe, *Judg.*8.18.) *Princes to look to*, (as thoſe *Ezek.*23.15. Not after the manner of the Babylonians, but) after the manner of the Sons of God: O what a State will this State be! To cloſe this Head: He that hath a genuine Idea, and right Notion of this State, muſt repreſent it to himſelf as that wherein Nature is perfected as to Things and Perſons, and fix'd in that Perfection; and Divine Government is compleated in all its Conſtitutions and Adminiſtrations; and all the Priviledges thereof diſpenſed, its Services perform'd exactly by all the Subjects thereof; and the great Ends and Purpoſes thereof attained and anſwered to univerſal ſatisfaction, and all this in the preſence of the Lord, upon his Throne, encompaſſed with his

his Redeemed Ones, who ſee his Glory, bear his Image, acknowledg his rich Grace and Love towards them, and ſerve and glorify his Name for ever, to his full ſatisfaction. God taking great delight in them, and they in him; and owning his Son before them all, as one that pleaſed his Heart in bringing all theſe Sons to Glory, whilſt all theſe Morning Stars together ſing their Hallelujahs with great harmony and chearfulneſs, and ſhout for joy, that God is *all in all* by Jeſus Chriſt with them; and that they can with ſo much order, chearfulneſs, and vigour, ſerve and pleaſe him moſt entirely and delightfully with his own in that Auguſt Aſſembly; for the preſence of the Lord Redeemer there, reſembled, loved, and ſerved by all the Inheritors, Citizens, and Subjects of that State, with ſo much Wiſdom, Holineſs, and Vigour, ſpeaks Heaven indeed. But let me not run too far.

2. Com-

2. Comfort *your ſelves*, and *one another*, with *theſe words*, 1 Theſſ.4.18. Think ſeriouſly upon 1 *Pet.* 1. 3--9. *Put on the Breſt-plate of Faith and Love; and for an Helmet the Hope of Salvation. For God hath not appointed us to Wrath, but to obtain Salvation by our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who died for us, that whether we wake or ſleep, we ſhould live together with him. Wherefore comfort your ſelves together, and edify one another, even as alſo ye do,* 1 Theſſ. 5. 8--11. The word here rendred *Comfort*, is παρακαλεῖτε, which is indeed, *to play the Advocate*, as the Matter ſhall require. To plead the Cauſe, the Ground and Uſefulneſs of this our glorious Expectation, againſt diſcouraging and afflictive Providences, as they are otherwiſe apt to diſpirit or diſturb us. When we are prone to ſwoon or tire, through the difficult Duties, heavy Burthens, ſmart Temptations, ſtrong Corruptions, and intricating poſtures of Affairs below: when we have little elſe in humane view, but great

great Work, and little Stength; huge Perplexities and ſtrange Intricacies in every Article of Concern, manifold Enemies and Hindrances aſſaulting us continually, and preſſing moſt ſeverely on us; and very little help or hope in view: O let us then our ſelves (and quicken one another to) repair unto *this Hope as our beſt Refuge, and our moſt ſure and ſtedfaſt Anchor within the Vail, whither our* Prodromus or *Forerunner is for us entred*, Heb. 6. 18. Rom. 8. 18. 2 Cor. 4. 16--18. uſing it as our richeſt Cordial, and urging it rationally and cloſely upon the Heart, until we are brought to our delightful and abſolute repoſe therein.

1. Comfort *your ſelves* with thoſe words, and ſo *begin at Home*, Rom. 5. 2. Phil. 3. 3. For unleſs ſuch grateful words come from the Speaker's Heart unto the Hearers, from Principle to Principle, they are not likely to have ſuch invigorating Influences upon Souls, nor to have ſuch kindly Operations and Effects in Chriſtian Converſation,

ſation, as the Caſe requires. *Vain talk* about ſo great an Article of Hope, is dreadful: and it is no better as to him that ſpeaks about it, until his own Heart duly be affected with it. Great Notions, and high flights of Speech, are but as *ſwelling Words of Vanity*, to him whoſe Tongue is not attended and actuated with a transformed, and thereupon, concerned Soul. Nor can indeed the Speaker's End be right, whilſt his Heart is naught, *2 Pet. 2. 18.* What God may do for the ſake of Truth, and with regard to his own Intereſt and Inſtitution, is one thing; and what ſuch an *heartleſs Talker* may expect, is another thing. And he that makes no reckoning of this bleſſed State and Hope himſelf, will not be very much concerned how ſuch things take with others, unleſs as it may ſerve thoſe lower Intereſts or popular Applauſes which are ſo much eyed and idolized by himſelf. But it is prophaneſs to the height, to proſtitute ſuch a *Sacred Ordinance as Chriſti-*

an Communion, and *ſuch a glorious State and Hope*, as being *ever with the Lord*, unto ſo mean and vile an End as ultimate ſelfiſhneſs. O then make thorow work within, and be what all muſt be, *that are to be for ever with the Lord.* Your Directory in this Caſe, you have in *Tit.* 2. 11--14. 2 *Pet.*1.5--11. & 3. 11--14. and when that is done, then make this State your ſtated and occaſional Conſolation and Refreſhment, that ſo you may comfort one another with the Comforts wherewith ye your ſelves are comforted of God, 2 *Cor.* 1. 3--5. And what now is it, think you, to comfort your ſelves herewith? I will tell you, (as deſiring, labouring, and hoping, through your intreated Prayer for me, and the ſupply of the Spirit to me, thus to do) It is, 1. by cloſe and ſolemn contemplation, to repreſent this State unto your ſelves, (according to the Goſpel-Scheme or Figure) as *great*, *ſure*, *near*, and *ſuited every way to make thoſe happy who obtain it*; as *yours*, by promiſe

miſe and in hope, (having been purchaſed, and being now poſſeſt *by Chriſt* for you; whoſe *Spirit* hath alſo ſealed you thereunto, and is your Pledg and Earneſt of it); and *as of far greater conſequence and concernment to you, than all which you can meet with here can countervail.* And, 2. it is pertinently and prudently to accommodate this your Encouragement and Support to every Exigence, ſo as to make you calm and eaſy in your ſelves, and ſenſibly and evidently pleaſed herewith, whatever this your Hope may coſt you here. You muſt conſider and apply it, and regularly enforce it upon your exerciſed Souls, and live upon it as your Food and Treaſure, and reſt herein, when little elſe but Toil and Sorrow here becomes your daily Entertainment. But I have more largely handled this, in my printed Sermon on *Pſal.* 42. 11. in Dr. *Anneſlie*'s *Morning Exerciſe*, and thither I refer you, (though ill printed).

2. Comfort one another with these words, *Mal.* 3. 16. 'tis needful, useful, and delightful thus to do; for God hath set this State, thus characterised before us, as our *Directory*, to shew us what we are to be and do, 1 *John* 3. 2, 3. as our *Encouragement* hereunto, 1 *Cor.* 15. 58. and as the *Reward* hereof, *Heb.* 10. 35--37. We are to give our Sentiments and Notions of this State, and to represent it in its greatness each to other. We are to confer about its certainty, and so to shew and settle the reasons of our belief hereof, to discourse the nearness of it, lest otherwise the Midnight-Cry surprize us; to talk about the Means and Evidence of our being entitled thereunto, and of its suitableness to all our holy Principles and Instincts, and to the Capacities and true Welfare of our Souls, and of those great and glorious Purposes which it may subserve; and to converse about the Snares which may be broken, and of the Mischiefs which may be prevented

vented by our lively Thoughts, Belief, and Hopes, and Reliſhes of this bliſsful State; and by our warm Diſcourſe about it. And we are to quicken one another to comparative Thoughts about it; that is, to conſider it in its Tranſcendencies above all that rivals or oppoſes it. Sometimes our Mouths or Palats have loſte their taſt and reliſh; and then Diſcourſe hereon muſt cure us; and the great Excellencies of our Lord, and of our abode with him for ever, muſt be diſplayed afreſh. Sometimes our Hearts are out of hope, and then Chriſt as our Advocate and Head in Heaven, preparing all Things for our ſolemn meeting with him, and as the Patron of this Hope, may be the proper and fit Theme for Chriſtian Conference about. Sometimes our Minds and Thoughts are vagrant, and like looſe Garments, rather hinder us than help us; and then ſome warm diſcourſe about this State may reduce our diſtracted Spirits to ſome advantageous compoſures. Somtimes our Hearts are

are cold and careleſs, and then ſome applicatory Conference about this heavenly State and Priviledg, may make them burn again within us. Sometimes the frame of Spirit, and courſe of Life, which is moſt congenial with this Lord and State, is much neglected; and we are degenerating into unchriſtian Principles, Diſpoſitions and Practices; and then to ſpeak of Chriſt in all thoſe Glories where he and we muſt dwell together, may recover us from our Decays and Lapſes. Sometimes our Devotions have not their proper Life and Spirit in them, as Prayer, Praiſe, Thanks, Sabbath-Solemnities, and Sacramental Commemorations and Tranſactions, *&c.* and then right Words warmly delivered and enforced, may make our Altars flame afreſh. And ſometimes we are in the Houſe of Mourning; ſome ſick, ſome weak, ſome dead, and ſome twice dead, all more or leſs lamenting the mournful State of Things, Souls, Perſons, *&c.* and then *for ever with the Lord*

Lord cloſely diſcourſed, may afford very great relief. For Chriſt, and all his Saints with him in Glory, allays the bitterneſs of all ſuch Cups, makes all Conditions eaſy, clears up the Brow, and warms the Heart, and adds new Life and Vigour to all our Winter and Summer-Graces, *Rom.* 5.2, 3. *Jam.* 1. 2--12. and fully reconciles us to all thoſe Scenes of Sorrows, and to Death it ſelf, through which we are to come to Chriſt. Converſe then more about this thing, for no Salt like this to ſeaſon Converſation with, *Col.* 4. 5. and nothing fitter to refreſh the drooping Soul. And therefore, *Ye Beloved, building up your ſelves (and one another) on your moſt holy Faith, praying in the Holy Ghoſt, keep your ſelves in the Love of God, looking for the Mercy of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt unto Eternal Life,* Jude 20, 21. *Now our Lord Jeſus Chriſt himſelf, and God even our Father, who hath loved us, and given us everlaſting Conſolation, and good Hope through Grace,*

Grace, comfort your Hearts, and eſtabliſh you in every good Word and Work, 2 Theſſ. 2. 16, 17. *And to him that is able to keep you from falling, and to preſent you faultleſs before the preſence of his Glory with exceeding Joy: To the only wiſe God our Saviour, be Glory and Majeſty, Dominion and Power, both now and ever. Amen.* Jude 24, 25.

FINIS.